

MINUTES OF MEETING OF SOUTH CAROLINA WILDLIFE RESOURCES COMMISSION IN COLUMBIA
FEBRUARY 21, 1969

Present were Chairman Eltzroth, Commissioners Glenn, Williams, Mishoe, Eppes, Rhame, and Thompson, Commissioner Emeritus Cantey, Bob Lunz, Pat Ryan, Roger Seamans, Jeff Fuller, Ed Latimer, Tommy Welch, Frank Nelson, Gene Howell and Oscar Sullivan.

The meeting was opened with a minute of silent prayer, after which Mr. Ryan was asked to present any matters that he had, Director Webb being out of town.

Mr. Ryan mentioned a call Mr. Webb had had from Rep. Goodman of the House Agriculture and Conservation Committee regarding a crab pot bill and Mr. Eltzroth said that this would be taken up by Dr. Lunz.

A number of appointments of wardens were approved, after no objections had been raised to names of those sent to the Commissioners. Baynard S. Platt was approved as a Charleston county warden.

Mr. Nelson was congratulated for being chosen Wildlife Conservationist of the Year by the Wildlife Federation and expressed his appreciation for the nomination by the Commission. On motion of Mr. Mishoe a committee was appointed to draw up a resolution congratulating Mr. Nelson. Members were Mr. Mishoe, Mr. Glenn and Mr. Eppes.

The question of what had been done regarding the fish kill by the J. P. Stevens company was brought up and Mr. Eltzroth said that he had talked with Attorney Billy Goldberg, who might wish to appear at the next meeting. The Secretary was instructed to write Mr. Goldberg inviting him.

Mr. Eltzroth then introduced Mr. Roach of the News and Courier.

Dr. Lunz distributed an agenda of matters that he planned to take up, including some figures on crab harvesting in South Carolina and information from other southeastern states.

He said the shad bill introduced by Senator Harrellson was now in the House Agriculture and Conservation Committee and that even if it were enacted it would be



extremely difficult, if not impossible to do anything this year. Mr. Eltzroth said that he understood Senator Harrelson had requested A&C Chairman Goodman to hold the bill until he hears from him.

Dr. Lunz said that Paul Nance had applied for a renewal of an oyster lease in Murrell's Inlet, which had been in existence since 1959, but that Georgetown Senator Claymon Grimes had protested that the lease would interfere with boating and swimming. Dr. Lunz also said that Mr. Nance's attorney, William Doar, had written him and he had agreed to bring the matter before the Commission.

Mr. Latimer was asked about the legal side and said that in his opinion Senator Grimes has the right to protest the granting of the lease but that the Commission has discretion on granting a hearing.

Mr. Mishoe moved that Senator Grimes be granted a hearing and Mr. Eltzroth asked Dr. Lunz to set the hearing with Senator Grimes and to find out whether he wants a one-man, three-man or full Commission hearing.

The question of closing the crab season--including the trawling season, which had already been closed for 30 days, and the crab pot season, which would be closed under a pending Concurrent Resolution introduced in the House--was then discussed at some length.

Dr. Lunz discussed the history of crab trawling in the State, which had begun around 1950, and said production had kept increasing, despite heavy catches, until the great mortality in 1966-67-68. Now, however, the population was down and he had been ready to recommend that trawling be suspended for 30 days, which has been done. He added that this year the trawlers had made money on their shrimp operations.

He said several trawlers had complained that they were being discriminated against in that the crab pots were not closed down. He added that the pots take only a comparatively few crabs, considering the total harvest, and also that they do not take many ready females.



He said that trawlers could not operate in Virginia in winter because of the laws and the weather and would come down to South Carolina to operate pots. He said the resolution introduced by Rep. Leamond was aimed at the out-of-staters, who are not banned by law from operating in this state.

He added that 200 to 300 people are dependent upon the pots for a living and would suffer hardship if the potting season were closed but pressure was increasing to close the potting. This would not affect Charleston but would be a real blow to Beaufort.

Mr. Eltzroth asked some questions about where the crabs were caught and where they were processed, it being brought out that much of the harvest was caught out of state and brought in to be processed. Mr. Eltzroth explained the she crab market of the Blue Channel Corporation.

In answer to a question from Mr. Mishoe, Mr. Eltzroth explained that trawling takes many more crabs than the pots, and also a much higher percentage of female crabs with eggs.

He said the matter of closing the seasons was primarily a matter for the General Assembly as the Commission has no control of the pots, but can close the season for 30 days at the discretion of the Chairman and with the advice of Bears Bluff. He added that he has recommended that trawling be stopped for the balance of the season ending April 1.

Dr. Lunz said the Toomer case ruling would prevent any discriminatory legislation against Virginia crabbers.

Mr. Eltzroth said he would like the feelings of the Commission as to what to present if they were asked to testify before the Assembly.

Mr. Glenn said that he understood that after there had been no trawling for crabs last year that there was a good shrimping season and also many young crabs,



and might it not be a good idea to try this for another year.

Dr. Lunz said there were many factors involved in this.

Mr. Eltzroth brought up the price difference in crabs--24 cents a pound in Virginia and 10 cents a pound in South Carolina--and Dr. Lunz gave some reasons for this.

Mr. Eltzroth asked whether any aids to marketing could be set up that might help the price of the product and Dr. Lunz said the prices were set in New York for shrimp and in New York, Louisiana and the Baltimore market for crabs.

Mr. Eltzroth asked about the possibility of a storage facility operated for the fishermen of the state and Dr. Lunz said this had been tried in North Carolina unsuccessfully. He cited the fluctuating prices and the trouble of establishing a continuous supply.

Mr. Glenn suggested a compromise regarding the efforts to ban crab pots, suggesting that they be kept out for a distance of 100 feet each side of the channel line of the Inland Waterway.

Mr. Eltzroth mentioned several compromise measures that could be offered but said this was not for the Commission to decide.

Mr. Glenn said that the South Carolina pots were marked as well as any state along the Inland Waterway.

Mr. Sullivan said there had been no difficulty with violations by the out-of-state potters, saying they observed the laws extremely well.

The minutes of the last meeting were approved.

Mr. Eltzroth said that in regard to the Marine Resources Center he had contacted Dr. Morris of the Commission of Higher Education and also written the presidents of Clemson and the University asking that the deans of their graduate schools serve as an advisory body to the Commission. He also said the sub-committee composed of Mr. Glenn, Mr. Mishoe and himself was meeting with the advisory body at 12.30 to



discuss various matters.

He further reported that the Coastal Plains Regional Commission bill is before the Senate with good chances of passage and strong support from Southern senators. It provides for \$20 million the first year, \$30 million the second and \$10 million supplemental each year. He said he would be in Washington early in March and would work on this.

He said a number of applications had been received for the position of Director of the Marine Center and it was hoped processing could begin within the next few weeks. He said the advice of the Academic Committee would be welcomed.

Mr. Glenn mentioned the correspondence regarding the April 20 meeting of the Southeastern Association of Game and Fish Commissioners in Knoxville and moved that the Chairman be appointed to represent the Commission.

Mr. Eltzroth said that he had been in contact with Mr. Wibberley of the Maryland Commission regarding the commissioners of the various states getting together. He said that he had agreed to act as chairman at the Knoxville meeting.

Mr. Mishoe brought up the question of the Commission setting a policy in respect to the appearance of Department personnel, particularly along hirsute lines.

Mr. Glenn agreed that something should be done but suggested that it should be left up to the Supervisors and carried out at the Department level.

Mr. Howell said he had discussed this matter with some of the Commissioners and agreed that something should be done.

After some discussion the following resolution was adopted:

"That it be the Commission policy that the Division Directors will instruct all Department heads that the Department expects all personnel to have an acceptable presentation of appearance in keeping with the decision made by the Commission at this meeting, at which enough has been said so that there should be no difficulty in understanding; and the Commission will expect to have this carried out by the Department heads."

Eddie Farley

